

The Health Benefits of Pets

Pets fulfill a basic human desire. They make us feel needed and important by their depending on us for their everyday needs. They give us unfailing friendship and nonjudgmental companionship. And best of all, these furry, scaly or feathered friends can help us stay healthy and happy!



Pets are great icebreakers. They are great topics of conversation, whether they are with you or at home. Pets promote social contact, decrease the feeling of loneliness and isolation, and improve morale and optimism.

They aid in relaxation, decrease anxiety and relieve stress better than humans! Stroking a pet or watching fish swim in an aquarium helps us to relax. The mere presence of a pet has the same effect of reducing heart beat rate and lowering blood pressure. Pet owners have lower blood pressure, lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels than non-owners.

Cats and dogs are great therapists. They instinctively seem to know when to seek us out; when we're feeling lonely, or sad. They make us feel happy, less depressed and less lonely. They improve our mood and sense of well-being. Dog owners are less afraid of being a victim of crime when walking with, or living with their pet.

A few other things to consider

- Babies reared in homes with pets have fewer pet allergies later in life.
- Heart attack survival rates are higher for people who own pets.
- Pet owners have fewer minor health problems and lower medical costs.
- Pets encourage playfulness, exercise, and promote laughter.
- Pets satisfy the need for touch and to be touched, and give nonjudgmental warmth and affection.